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DISARMAMENT COMMITTEE

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FOURTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 29 January 1991, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. SUTRESNA (Indonesia)

- Organizational matters
- Other business
- Statement by the Chairman

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

The CHAIRMAN: At our meetings last December, we considered and took decisions on issues related to the 1990 organizational session, including the election of officers for 1991 and the appointment of chairmen for the subsidiary bodies. However, we did not conclude our consideration of those issues, including the appointment of chairmen for Working Groups III and IV, due to ongoing consultations between the regional groups concerned. With regard to the remaining candidate for vice-chairmanship of the Disarmament Commission for 1991, I have been informed that the Group of African States has nominated Ethiopia for that post.

If there is no objection, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to elect the representative of Ethiopia as Vice-Chairman of the Commission for 1991 by acclamation.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: I wish to extend my warm congratulations to the representative of Ethiopia on his election.

As a result of my consultations in the past few weeks with interested delegations and regional groups concerned, I am pleased to announce that the Disarmament Commission is now in a position to make the following appointments with regard to the chairmanships of Working Groups III and IV.

Working Group III, on a regional approach to disarmament within the context of global security, will be chaired by Ambassador Nugroho Wisnumurti of Indonesia.

Working Group IV, on the role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields, will be chaired by Ambassador Luiz De Araujo Castro of Brazil.

In connection with the above arrangements, it is understood that at the 1992 session of the Commission, the agenda item "Regional approach to disarmament within

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the context of global security" will be chaired by a candidate nominated by the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States.

If I hear no comments, I shall take it that the Disarmament Commission wishes to make the above-mentioned appointments for the chairmanships of Working Groups III and IV.

It was so decided.

OTHER BUSINESS

The CHAIRMAN: Does any member wish to raise any other matter at this stage?

Mr. HOHENFELLNER (Austria): I merely wish to express to you, Sir, my deep gratitude and that of the Austrian delegation for the very efficient work you have done, on both substantive and organizational aspects. I want also to congratulate the new Chairmen of the four working groups on their assumption of their very important posts. I assure the officers of the Disarmament Commission for 1991 that I intend to work very closely with them and with the Chairmen of the working groups.

I express the hope, Sir, that the 1991 session will be as successful as the session held under your chairmanship.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN: In reviewing the work of the Disarmament Commission for 1990, I am happy to state that, with the co-operation of all delegations, the Commission was able to conclude all substantive agenda items except the new one, on objective information on military matters, which is now on the agenda of the Commission for 1991.

The Commission adopted by consensus texts on items regarding the question of South Africa's nuclear capability, the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament, conventional disarmament and the draft declaration of the 1990s as the third disarmament decade. Considerable progress was also made on the item regarding naval armaments and disarmament: the findings and recommendations on that subject were endorsed by all participants in the consultations.

To give a general assessment of the work of the Commission, I consider that success was achieved at the 1990 session, with all member States demonstrating co-operation, flexibility and a spirit of compromise. As I pointed out on an earlier occasion, the item regarding the arms race and nuclear disarmament has generally been considered as the most difficult on the agenda. It is an item on which the Commission was practically required to formulate a mini-comprehensive programme of disarmament. Thus, it was no surprise that at this juncture the

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Commission was not able to adopt a consensus text on the subject. However, the subject is too important to be set aside and it has therefore been included again on the agenda of the 1991 session of the Commission. Taking into account previous experience on the subject, it might be advisable for the Commission to focus on a specific topic within the field of nuclear disarmament so as to reach agreement on some concrete recommendations.

Finally, since this meeting is the last under my chairmanship, I cannot fail to express my gratitude to all delegations for their understanding and businesslike manner in conducting the work of the Commission in 1990 in fulfilment of the tasks entrusted to it by the General Assembly, including the implementation of the reform programme that was adopted. A special tribute should be paid to the members of the Bureau of the Commission, in particular the Rapporteur, Mrs. Liberata Mulamula of the United Republic of Tanzania, and the Chairmen of the various working groups, the contact group and the consultation groups - namely Mr. Sergey Martynov of the Byelorussian SSR, Ambassador Jai Pratap Rana of Nepal, Ambassador Roberto Garcia Moritan of Argentina, Ambassador Sergio de Queiroz Duarte of Brazil, Ambassador Nugroho Wisnumurti of Indonesia, Ambassador Sjold Mellbin of Denmark, Ambassador Emeka Azikiwe of Nigeria and Ambassador Peter Hohenfellner of Austria - for their co-operation and assistance.

I should like also to express my sincere thanks to the Department for Disarmament Affairs for the valuable assistance provided to the Commission and to me; I thank particularly the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Yasushi Akashi, and the Secretary of the Disarmament Commission, Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung, as well as their colleagues serving as secretaries of the

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subsidiary bodies of the Commission. On behalf of the Commission I extend my great appreciation to the other members of the Secretariat who assisted the Commission in carrying out its task in 1990.

With those brief remarks, I declare closed the 1990 organizational session of the Disarmament Commission.

The meeting rose at 3.40 p.m.